OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

MANUFACTURES, TRADE,

AND

PRESENT STATE OF IRELAND.

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OF

IRELAND.

By JOHN LORD SHEFFIELD.

——— Non Hoſtem, inimicaque Caſtra
Argivûm, veſtras Spes Uritis ———

PART THE FIRST.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following Obſervations conſiſt principally of materials, which were intended to be employed in another work. Such reputation as might have been acquired by attention to ſtyle, ornament, and arrangement, is ſacrificed for the ſake of ſtating, while it is not too late, to the People of Great Britain, as well as to thoſe of Ireland, ſome facts, very intereſting to them, and the knowledge of which poſſibly may be of ſervice with reſpect to the queſtions that are immediately to come before the Legiſlature.

As it is the management of theſe times to conceal from the Public the meaſures that are intended, and as Miniſters are ſatiſfied with carrying certain queſtions through Parliament without troubling themſelves about farther conſiderations, the Author can only reaſon on the general notoriety of thoſe meaſures; and he ſhall be happy if at leaſt part of that, to which it is ſaid the Government of the two kingdoms is pledged, may not prove true. A wiſh to ſerve both countries could alone have induced him to undertake as diſagreeable a taſk as has ever fallen to his lot; and when he adds, that he is ſenſible how much of what he ſtates is likely, till well underſtood, to be diſpleaſing to many in both countries, and unlikely to ſuit their prejudices, he, on thoſe accounts, hopes he may claim ſome ſort of merit. The Manufacturers of Britain will not be

ſatisfied

ſatisfied with all his doctrines; but in this he muſt acquieſce for the preſent, as the experience of mankind tells us, that he who does not go every length with thoſe who are intereſted in a queſtion, unavoidably riſks their good opinion.

In reſpect to Ireland, it is painful to him in an extreme degree, to ſeem even to the moſt prejudiced and unreaſonable, to take a part againſt her in the propoſed arrangement with Britain, although it be only in the ſingle point relative to the alteration of the Navigation Act; (for he cannot conſider Protecting Duties as the wiſh of that country at large;) but he is convinced that the generality of the People of Ireland are not aware of the whole extent of what has been deſired on that head. He thinks them more reaſonable than to form ſuch a wiſh, and is

ſure that when the conſequences of the propoſed alteration are laid before them, that generoſity of character, for which they are diſtinguiſhed, muſt prevent their continuing to aſk it; and it is only by ſtating the caſe of Britain ſtrongly, that they are likely to ſee how unreaſonable their claim is. If he were even to conſider the matter merely as an Iriſhman, who only cared for one part of the empire, without the leaſt regard for the good and advantage of the whole, he would not wiſh the meaſure to take place; becauſe, if Britain ſhould be ſurpriſed into it, and the alteration which is deſired ſhould ignorantly and inconſiderately be made, he knows ſhe muſt reclaim the conceſſion ſhe had made. He moſt ardently wiſhes that ſuch a mortification may be ſpared to Ireland, and that the conſequences which would reſult from it, may be prevented; and it is from this

wiſh he is induced to take a part in the queſtion. If merely from the fear of riſking the unfavourable opinion of the People of that Country, he ſhould withhold the information which is in his power, or decline to ſtate matters which they ought to know, he ſhould feel himſelf unworthy to belong to them; and he ſhould think it diſhoneſt, in the higheſt degree, to enter on the ſubject, without the reſolution to treat it with the utmoſt impartiality. If he had prejudices, they would probably be in favour of Ireland; and perhaps their foundation might be traced to the indignation he has formerly felt on the treatment of that country. He is, however, equally intereſted in the welfare of both countries; and if he could ſuſpect himſelf of partiality to either of them, he moſt aſſuredly would have avoided the ſubject. His ſituation in reſpect to both, may and

ought

ought to prevent his being prejudiced; at leaſt it is ſuch as has ſerved to give him ſome knowledge of the intereſts of each. He can have no motive for taking part againſt either: his deſire was to repreſent the real ſtate of Ireland, as far as he could; to prevent miſchievous, idle, or unavailing clamour, and to counteract the deſigns of thoſe whoſe object is to miſlead and dupe the people.

It will give him great ſatisfaction, if now, or in future, theſe Obſervations ſhould lead to cool and diſpaſſionate examination, and in the end, to the mutual advantage of Great Britain and Ireland. He has ſtated many facts; he has freely obſerved upon thoſe facts; and he hopes what he has remarked will give riſe to reflections more uſeful and important.

The

The Tables will give a more correct idea of the ſtate of Manufactures and Trade than could have been formed without them. A greater detail relative to parts of the Fiſheries, to particular Manufactures, and to the trade to ſome countries, which, however, may not at preſent be of much conſequence, ſhould have been given, if there had been more time; but it being declared, that the very buſineſs, which is the principal object of theſe Obſervations, is immediately to be diſcuſſed, the information herein contained, ſuch as it is, if delayed, would have come too late. If there had been leiſure for the purpoſe, the author would have informed himſelf more fully on ſome other points, and the whole of what he now offers, might have appeared in a more finiſhed ſtate.

The author takes his leave, by wiſhing his exertions, in favour of the great points which were the objects of the Navigation Laws, may not be confounded with narrow reſtrictions relative to Manufactures and Commerce in general. He is rather diſpoſed to diſcountenance and diſſuade all reſtraints, except thoſe which are neceſſary to ſupport the Britiſh Marine, to make Britain the mart of commerce, and to ſecure to her Dominions the only return ſhe can reap for the great expence of her foreign ſettlements, namely, the monopoly of their ſupply.

SHEFFIELD PLACE,
Jan. 25, 1785.

OBSER-

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THE extenſions given in the courſe of the laſt ſix years to the trade and commerce of Ireland, are ſo recent in the recollection of both kingdoms, that it would be ſuperfluous to ſtate them in detail, notwithſtanding that they form the ground work of the following Obſervations. It would be equally ſuperfluous to record, as the ſequel of that detail, the expreſſions uſed by a warm-hearted people, in the firſt flow of their ſentiments, under a change of circumſtances, moſt auſpi-

cious, it may be hoped, not only to them, but to the proſperity of the whole Britiſh empire, of which they form a conſiderable part. Ireland had been placed by the hand of Providence in an advanced ſituation between the two Continents, with excellent harbours towards the prevailing winds, and with the bleſſing of a fertile ſoil, and temperate climate; but ſhe had nevertheleſs long laboured in an inefficient and helpleſs poverty, under a ſyſtem of reſtraints equally pernicious, unwiſe, and unjuſt.—It is natural, that the minds of her people ſhould be elated on the emancipation of their induſtry and activity; and perhaps a conſiderable period muſt elapſe, before they ſettle ſufficiently, either to aſcertain the intrinſic value of their late acquiſitions, or to adopt the means of applying thoſe acquiſitions to the beſt effect: the beſt habits of exertion are not ſuddenly to be expected, though they may gradually be formed by the natural progreſſion of a free commerce, and the foſtering attention of a wiſe and ſettled government.

From ſuch attainments alone can reſult that increaſe of ſtock and capital, which

will be eſſentially neceſſary, before Ireland can avail herſelf of half her advantages. In the mean time, many of her people ſeem diſpoſed rather to ſeek farther ſpeculative and theoretical claims, than to cultivate the ſolid benefits which they actually poſſeſs; whilſt others are riſquing and prejudicing the principal ſtaple of their country, by forcing its weak capital into too many and new branches. Theſe unſteady and extravagant attempts have a tendency not only to check trade, but to provoke retaliation.

It is now well known among commercial nations, that manufactures, forced, and ſupported by bounties and prohibitions, cannot long thrive, and are not only a loſs to the community, in proportion to their expence, but are farther pernicious, by tempting away hands from the thriving manufactures. By aiming at too many things at once, Ireland will ſucceed in none; but by purſuing certain ſtaple articles that beſt ſuit her, ſhe may bring them to that perfection which will command the markets. A country, of the extent of Ireland, cannot expect to prevail in every manufacture; ſhe may trifle in many,

but ſhe can excel at foreign markets in few; and thoſe, under proper management, may be amply ſufficient to give both employment and affluence to her people.—It is the abundance of a manufacture, and the general eſtabliſhment of it in a country, that makes it both cheap and good.

The Iriſh have been repreſented as being lazy, and not diſpoſed to labour: they are, however, of an active nature, and capable of the greateſt exertions; and of as good a diſpoſition as any nation, in the ſame ſtate of improvement: their Generoſity, Hoſpitality, and Bravery, are proverbial: intelligence and zeal in whatever they undertake will not be wanting: but it has been the faſhion to judge of them from their outcaſts. The Highlanders of Scotland, in their ſtate of nature, are alſo ſaid to be indolent. That men who have very little to do, ſhould appear to do little, is not ſtrange; but who thinks them indolent, when brought into ſituations where they can act? The Highlanders, indeed, have ſtill leſs reaſon for indolence than the Iriſh; the country of the former with difficulty

culty can ſubſiſt them, while the plentiful ſoil of Ireland encourages idleneſs.—Perhaps the cheapneſs of the common food, potatoes, may be juſtly deemed a cauſe of idleneſs, and conſequently detrimental to manufactures; a ſmall garden of potatoes will ſubſiſt a family. Few countries have become completely induſtrious, till the price of proviſions was comparatively high. In how many towns, even of England, where the manufacturers can acquire a ſubſiſtence, without daily labour, do numbers of them conſume the Monday and Tueſday in idleneſs? The common people of Ireland have not had the encouragement they might have had, if an unfortunate difference of religion had not prevailed, and if it had not been thought a neceſſary policy, not to bring forward the maſs of the people who differed from the reformed church, but more eſpecially becauſe their principles were ſuppoſed to be hoſtile not only to the eſtabliſhed religion, but to the eſtabliſhed government. Lately, the ſevere laws againſt Roman Catholics have been repealed, and many unneceſſary reſtraints removed; Reſtraints which had ſhamefully laſted too long, and can only be accounted for by the acrimony

acrimony of the times in which they were impoſed. At preſent, perhaps, the improvement of Ireland is as rapid as any country ever experienced, nor will any thing check it, but the weakneſs of human nature, an ill-founded diſſatisfaction, and an extravagant diſpoſition to innovation and change.

Jealouſies in trade between England, Scotland, and Ireland will ever occur. Such jealouſies in ſome reſpects ſtimulate uſeful competition, and in the end improve manufactures, and promote trade. In the fermentation and progreſs of ſuch jealouſies, appeals will frequently be made to the Legiſlature, and the interference of the Legiſlature, when obtained, will generally prove miſchievous to the great intereſts of commerce, without giving ſatisfaction to any of the contending parties. In ſuch inſtances, however, much good may be done by wiſe and diligent Miniſters, who think it their duty to watch, to inquire, and fully to inform themſelves. Prejudices may be removed, miſtakes may be expoſed, and ſometimes uſeful regulations may be introduced. This remark has been ſuggeſted by the preſent circumſtances of Ireland:

Ireland: it has been already hinted, that ſhe aims at more than her capital can poſſibly ſupport, or in which ſhe can poſſibly ſucceed: ſome of her people have been ignorantly eager in profeſſing an unfriendly diſpoſition to Britiſh manufactures, and perhaps perſuade themſelves, that under the term "Protecting Duties*," they can conceal their real meaning — the introduction of a plan of prohibitory duties. Happily, a conſiderable proportion of the country thinks differently; and her Parliament, after a full inveſtigation, rejected the meaſure, by a great majority. Yet, many ſtill retain the diſpoſition to occupy themſelves, and diſturb others, with attempts to introduce the miſchievous ſyſtem. A war of protecting duties and bounties, would anſwer to neither country; it would be extremely prejudicial to both; it would be ruinous to Ireland. The duty propoſed would be prohibitory. If Ireland prohibits the ſtaple manufacture of Great Britain, meaſures of a ſimilar tendency would inevitably

* The duties propoſed were ſo high as to be prohibitory of Britiſh, and therefore protecting Iriſh woollens.

and

and ſoon take place, reſpecting the ſtaple manufacture of Ireland. Even by doing much leſs, the great article of trade, on which Ireland depends, her linen manufacture, would be ruined; merely the placing Iriſh linens on the ſame footing as foreign, would almoſt entirely prevent the uſe of them in England, and be ten times more prejudicial to Ireland, than her prohibition of Engliſh woollens would be to Great Britain. Meaſures, too, might be purſued in that line, which would forward and aſſiſt the intereſts of Great Britain, in the north of Europe.

But while prohibitory duties might bring real evils on Ireland, they would fail of anſwering the end intended: they encourage contraband trade; and no laws could prevent the ſmuggling of Britiſh manufactures into Ireland: the near neighbourhood and great intercourſe give a facility, which could not be obviated; nor could non-importation agreements laſt long. Ireland would ſoon be tired of the impoſitions of her own manufacturers, who would immediately avail themſelves of the opportunity, and who have raiſed the clamour for the purpoſe of exacting

No. I.

TOTAL VALUE of all Commodities exported from Ireland to Britain for Ten Years, ending the 25th of March, 1783, distinguishing each Year, and the separate Value of Linens, Linen Yarn, Wool, Worsted, and Bay Yarn.

Years	Value of Linen.			Linen Yarn.			Wool.			Worsted and Bay Yarn.			Total of the Foregoing Articles.			Other Articles exported to Britain from Ireland.			Total Exports to Britain.		
	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
1774	1237121	11	0	175166	0	0	503	11	7¾	95880	16	8	1508671	19	3¾	605177	19	0	2113849	18	3¾
1775	1458543	15	0	183592	15	0	1003	12	11¼	118345	11	8	1761485	14	7¼	615031	18	7½	2376517	13	2¾
1776	1435110	16	4	216915	5	0	529	14	1¾	129790	15	0	1782346	10	5¾	765114	3	5	2547460	13	10¾
1777	1387584	5	5	178190	0	0	867	6	6¾	170054	15	0	1736696	6	11¾	810435	18	1	2547132	5	0¾
1778	1542748	13	1	168653	0	0	832	12	3	184134	0	0	1896368	5	4	816124	0	4¾	2712492	5	8¼
1779	1335043	4	0	214020	10	0	1939	5	5½	151409	3	4	1602412	2	9¼	650564	9	11½	2252976	12	8½
1780	1219921	0	0	254219	15	0	1082	7	5	127321	0	0	1602544	2	5	778690	15	10¼	2381234	18	3¼
1781	961455	13	4	223215	0	0	552	7	11¼	122786	3	4	1308009	4	7¼	872206	3	4½	2180215	7	11¾
1782	1646138	2	8	169126	10	0	1482	8	9	125732	8	0	1942479	9	5	757346	4	3½	2699825	13	8½
1783	1014197	18	0	214877	13	0	1031	10	11¼	100015	15	0	1330122	16	11¼	659167	19	9¾	1989290	16	9

exacting an additional profit from the conſumer; ſhe would ſoon find ſhe cannot ſupply herſelf, and that efforts which may fall heavily on her in other reſpects, will ſerve her in no reſpect, but would greatly raiſe the price to her people of that eſſentially neceſſary article, cloathing.

Thoſe who examine with a jealous eye the advantages reſulting to Great Britain from her ſupplying Ireland with certain articles, ſhould obſerve the prodigious quantity of linen with which Ireland ſupplies Great Britain; the value of which, in the year ending the 25th of March, 1782, exceeded all the imports into Ireland of the growth, produce, and manufacture of Great Britain: it amounted to 24,692,072 yards, value 1,646,138l. 2s. 8d. Iriſh money*; beſides

* See the table No. I. The author inadvertently took the year of the greateſt export; but the average of four years, ending the 25th of March, 1778, and previous to the exports of Ireland being hurt by her non-importation agreements, (which they were) was in value 1,455,999l. 7s. 5½d. In conſequence of thoſe agreements, and other circumſtances, the value of linen ex-

ſides linen yarn, to the amount of 169,126l. 10s. In the ſame year, all the imports into Ireland, of the produce and manufacture of Great Britain, amounted to 1,486,317l. 2s. 4d.; of which the quantity and value of woollens was as follows, and it happened to be the year of the greateſt import:

	Yards.		£.	s.	d.
Old drapery, -	362,824	- Value	253,976	0	0
New drapery, -	547,336	- ——	68,417	0	0
			322,393	0	0

And it is farther worthy of notice, that, in the ſame year, when Ireland exported

	Yards.		£.	s.	d.
To Britain - -	24,692,072	value	1,646,138	2	8
She exported to all the reſt of the world only - -	278,231	——	18,548	14	8
And coloured linens	113,655¼	——	5,984	9	9
Total export -	25,083,958¼				

ports fell, in 1781, to 961,455l. The next year, 1782, however, as uſually happens on ſuch occaſions, it increaſed, and to the great amount above mentioned.

Moreover

Moreover it may be obſerved, that Ireland does not grow a ſufficiency of wool of a proper ſort, if ſhe ſhould manufacture the whole of it, to ſupply her own conſumption of woollens; and that ſhe could not get the ſame articles cheaper from any other country than from Great Britain. At the ſame time, a great proportion of the linens which Great Britain takes from Ireland might be got cheaper from the north of Europe: and Ireland ſhould remember, that, of all her exports in the ſame year, viz. 1782, Britain alone took 2,699,825l. 13s. 8½d. How trifling, comparatively, the remainder of her exports, will appear under the head of her general trade.

The year 1783 was not exactly the period when we ſhould have expected the woollen manufacturers of Ireland to be moſt clamorous, and that they ſhould enter upon the moſt violent meaſures. Unprejudiced people, at leaſt, will think that the complaints were ill timed; and the following account of the exports of woollens* will prove it. It

* Excluſive of frize, flannels, ſtockings, and mixtures of woollens, and hats.

ſhould be remarked, that the export was allowed only during a ſmall part of the year 1780.

Old drapery exported from Ireland, year ending the 25th of March,

		Yards.
1780	——	494
1781	——	3,740
1782	——	4,633
1783	——	40,589

New drapery exported from Ireland, year ending the 25th of March,

		Yards.
1780	——	8,653
1781	——	286,859
1782	——	336,607
1783	——	538,061

And as a farther proof of the increaſe of the woollen manufacture in Ireland, it appears that the export of wool, woollen, and worſted yarn had decreaſed above half. The average export of the laſt, which is the principal article, for ſeven years, ending the 25th of March, 1770, was 142,890 ſtones. The average of the ſame number

of

of years, ending the 25th of March, 1783, was 66,679 ſtones.

It ſhould be remarked, that at the time Ireland, on the opening of her ports for exportation of woollens, made an effort to ſend the above quantity to foreign markets, ſhe increaſed her imports of woollens. This helps to ſhew an advantage in taking away that unreaſonable reſtraint, and ſhould convince us, that the more Ireland exports, the greater her neceſſity will be of importing from England. Ireland was enabled to work up her wool in thoſe articles which beſt ſuited it, and to the greateſt advantage, for foreign markets, inſtead of employing it to diſadvantage, and increaſed the importation of ſuch woollen articles as England could furniſh cheaper than ſhe could make them.

On an average of four years, from 1763 to 1767, Ireland imported,

	Yards.
New drapery, -	281,557
Old drapery, -	196,047

On an average of four years, ending the 25th of March, 1783, Ireland imported,

	Yards.
New drapery, -	390,095
Old drapery, -	281,406

But the increaſe of the importation of the principal article, new drapery, was only about one fifth of the increaſed manufacture for exportation.

	Yards.
Increaſed quantity of new drapery imported, - - -	108,538
New drapery exported, year ending the 25th of March, 1783, -	538,061

And the export of the latter article, the ſame year, exceeded the import near 120,000 yards. And farther it ſhould be remarked, that, in the very year when ſo large a quantity of Iriſh woollens were able to meet Britiſh at foreign market, a duty was aſked on Britiſh to enable Iriſh woollens to meet them at the markets of Ireland.

It ſhould be obſerved, however, that the manufacture of woollens was not ſo much increaſed as appears from the ſtated export of the four laſt years: a certain proportion

of

of thoſe articles, which now appear in the exports, were ſmuggled from Ireland previous to 1778, at which time the prohibition to export was taken off with reſpect to the Britiſh plantations in America, or the Weſt Indies, or any Britiſh ſettlement on the coaſt of Africa. Before that time, woollens could not be mentioned in the Cuſtom-houſe ſtate of the exports of Ireland; but now that the export is opened to all the world, by the acts of 1780 and 1781, it is found that two thirds of her woollens go to Portugal, to which place ſhe probably ſent nearly as much before. The importation, however, of moſt of thoſe articles into Portugal, both then and now, was, and is, ſuppoſed to be prohibited by Portugal: and it ſhould farther be remarked, that as woollens are not ſubject to duties on export, the vanity, and other motives of merchants may have induced them to enter greater quantities for exportation than they have really ſent.

But ſome of the violent *friends* of Ireland ſay, we will have non-importation agreements, protecting duties, prohibitions, &c.

If

If you don't take our linens, we will not only refuſe Britiſh, but alſo foreign and colonial commodities from Great Britain, and the two laſt amount to near 800,000l. yearly *.

It will be anſwered, that Great Britain gives to the principal manufacture of Ireland every advantage in every part of her dominions, and may moſt reaſonably expect that her own principal manufacture ſhould, in return, have equal advantages in Ireland, which they have not. The linens Great Britain takes from Ireland are five times the value of

* Some of theſe pretended friends of Ireland, who, whether actuated by an honeſt and zealous ignorance, or by worſe motives, are likely to prove her greateſt enemies, have been driven, by the abſurdity of their pretenſion, into the moſt contradictory mode of reaſoning: for, on ſome occaſions, they treat as a ſeparate kingdom, not only independent, but utterly unconnected; on others, they claim as a part of the empire, entitled (according to an inauſpicious phraſe) to a reciprocity of equal rights. For the ſake of fairneſs in argument, it is to be wiſhed they would chuſe one predicament or the other. The attempt to blend both characters, is not calculated to promote either candour or perſpicuity.

the

the woollens taken from Britain. Ireland takes nothing from her that ſhe can get cheaper or better elſewhere, except the commodities of the Britiſh Weſt Indies; and, in return, ſhe has an advantage in her ſhare of the monopoly of the Weſt-India markets, and ſhe has no pretenſion to trade with the plantations on any other principle. Whatever elſe ſhe takes of colonial or foreign articles, is for her own convenience; and before Ireland cuts off all commercial intercourſe with Great Britain, it may be worth her while to conſider the proportion of the exports of Ireland taken by Great Britain, as already mentioned: it will appear that her exports to all other parts did not, in the ſame year, much exceed, in value, the twentieth part of her exports to Britain, and in that part are included the exports to the Britiſh plantations, which would be found no ſmall part, but which would be alſo loſt, as ſuch proceedings on the part of Ireland would naturally tend to interrupt all commercial intercourſe with the Britiſh colonies and empire. Great Britain has found it poſſible to exiſt, and to maintain, her commercial affluence againſt the combinations and inter-

ruptions of many principal markets in both Continents; but Ireland has not yet made the experiment, how ſhe could exiſt without the markets of the Britiſh dominions: and when Ireland ſhall be ſo madly adviſed, neither fleets nor armies, nor any extraordinary expence, will be neceſſary, on the part of Great Britain, to convince her ſhe is wrong: hurtful it may be for a time; but in the end, and ſoon, Great Britain muſt prevail: Ireland cannot: for it does not appear where ſhe will get what ſhe wants, and that ſhe has credit with other nations to the amount ſhe would require; or where ſhe will diſpoſe of what ſhe has, if ſhe ſhould have no intercourſe with Great Britain or the Britiſh colonies. It will be found, that it is the intercourſe with the Britiſh dominions that enables Ireland to trade in any conſiderable degree.

This hoſtile mode of argument is, however, very improperly brought on by Ireland. It would ill become either kingdom to encourage even the diſcuſſion of ſuch propoſitions; and the ſeat of empire could never adopt the meaſures hinted at, unleſs unavoidably

unavoidably driven to them. Under the preſent enlarged and free ſyſtem of commerce, there is demand and trade enough in the world to occupy the utmoſt induſtry of both countries. This kind of ſcrutiny, then, ſhould not take place; but if Ireland will force it forwards, the inveſtigation will not prove either beneficial or flattering to her. She might at leaſt be ſatisfied until ſhe finds herſelf in the ſituation of being able to ſay to Britain, My ports ſhall be open to all your manufactures, free of all duties, on condition that your ports ſhall be open to mine in the like manner. — Ireland is hardly in the ſituation to agree to that propoſal; and the generality of Engliſhmen would probably at firſt object: but there is nothing in it which ſhould alarm them. Great Britain could underſel Ireland in moſt manufactures: ſuch is the predominancy of ſuperior ſkill, induſtry, and capital, over low-priced labour, and comparatively very few taxes. — Many would object to the extenſion of this idea to raw materials, as well as to manufactures; but even the permitting Engliſh wool and fullers' earth, charged with inland carriage, freight, com-

miſſion, &c. to go to Ireland, need not alarm, on the ground of giving a ſuperiority to the latter*. Let it be remembered, that England underſels other countries even in the manufacture of Spaniſh wool. The wool grower in England, who ſubmits the monopoly of his wool to the manufacturers,

* The Engliſh woollen manufacturers will ſay, the export of wool from England to Ireland muſt greatly reduce the price of wool in the latter country, and, with the low price of labour, enable the Iriſh manufacturers to underſel them, and of courſe will urge the ſame objections as they do, to the export of wool to France. On the other hand, the wool growers of Ireland will oppoſe the reduction of the price, which is from 3s. to 4s. per ſtone higher than in England: and it is ſaid, until mutton becomes a more common food in Ireland, and the price conſequently riſes, it would not anſwer to keep up the preſent number of ſheep, if not encouraged by the high price of wool. The increaſe of tillage in that country, it is ſuppoſed, will naturally decreaſe the number of ſheep, unleſs, by a mode of agriculture ſuperior to the preſent, and a more general introduction of artificial graſſes, turneps, &c. ſhe ſhould be enabled to keep a greater ſtock. Yet the following account of the great fair of Ballinaſloe, in Connaught, ſeems to prove that the number of ſheep was increaſing in Ireland. Tillage, however, has made, comparatively, very little progreſs in that part of the kingdom.

turers, might receive ſome relief. This, however, is a nice point, and does not require any diſcuſſion at preſent.

ABSTRACT of WOOL ſold at the different Fairs of Ballinaſloe, from July, 1771, to July, 1778, incluſive.

Date.	No. of Bags ſold.	No. of do. unſold.	Total.
1771, July,	1492	15	1507
1772, ——,	1286	11	1297
1773, ——,	1550	33	1583
1774, ——,	1623	25	1648
1775, ——,	1574	61	1635
1776, ——,	1857	64	1921
1777, ——,	2004	70	2074
1778, ——,	1359	553	1912
Total No.	12745	832	13577
Yearly average	1593	104	1697

N. B. The failure in 1778 aroſe from the ſtagnation of credit, and a decreaſe of the demand for bay yarn from England.

SHEEP ſold at the ſaid Fair.

Date.	ſold.	unſold.	Total.
1771, Oct.	51950	——	51950
1772, ——	53632	50	53682
1773, ——	55242	6390	61682
1774, ——	60796	5302	66633
1775, ——	63904	1020	64924
1776, ——	66873	639	67512
1777, ——	63792	12743	76535
1778, ——	44894	31588	76482

EQUAL DUTIES.

Inſtead of protecting or prohibitory duties, which would not anſwer the purpoſe of the promoters of them; or an entire removal of all duties between the two countries, for which, it has been already obſerved, Ireland is not yet ripe; perhaps to lower the Britiſh inoperative duties to the Iriſh, would be the leaſt exceptionable meaſure: it would leave the trade nearly on its preſent footing; and it is the intereſt of the Britiſh manufacturers that the duties ſhould be equalized, rather by lowering them here, than by raiſing them in Ireland.

To this many of the Engliſh woollen manufacturers would object: but if Great Britain ſhould take off the heavy duties on the importation of Iriſh woollens into Britain, it would not be of the advantage to Ireland that ſhe imagines, nor a material check to the Britiſh manufacturers of wool. On the part of England and Scotland, it may be worth while to conſider, that lowering high duties to the ſcale of the Iriſh, while it will take away the arguments, and may

ſuppreſs

ſuppreſs the clamours of the diſcontented in Ireland, cannot hurt their own manufactures. The heavy duties on the importation of Iriſh manufactures into Great Britain are prohibitory: they are in general unneceſſary; and only ſerve to irritate and keep alive prejudice and falſe notions. For while Great Britain can underſel Ireland, even in the home markets of the latter, in almoſt every manufacture, charged with land carriage in Britain, freight, duties on landing, and commiſſion; and notwithſtanding the bounties given by the Dublin Society, or Parliament; Ireland ſurely could not ſell any quantity of manufactures at Britiſh markets, or much more to foreign countries, than ſhe does now. She may, indeed, be able to export, in the courſe of trade, and to aſſort in cargoes, to a certain extent, ſome articles which ſhe cannot make cheaper than England, but not in quantities to prejudice the latter. Perhaps, one of the ſtrongeſt objections at preſent to opening the Britiſh markets to the Iriſh manufactures, is the danger of ſmuggling cargoes from the Continent of Europe.

Ireland, it is ſaid, can afford ſome broad ſtuffs, durants, ſhalloons, and ſhags, cheaper than

than Great Britain: her flannels are as good, if not the beſt: her blankets are as cheap: and in hair pluſh and druggets, ſhe can rival France: but, if it be true, ſhe has not a ſufficiency of wool to carry thoſe manufactures to any great extent. The very price of that article, which is generally 3s. or 4s. at leaſt per ſtone of 16 pounds higher than in England, as already mentioned, muſt prevent her; for it was the low price of labour alone which enabled Ireland to ſend woollen or worſted yarn to Britain *.

It is, therefore, really the ſuperior quality and cheapneſs of Britiſh manufacture, that prevents import from Ireland. Mr. Arthur Young has inquired, why give in linen what you deny in other fabrics? Iriſh linen has all the advantages of a freedom from a great variety of exciſes, which the manufacturers of Engliſh linen labour under, and yet the Engliſh manufacture, ſo burthened, thrives, from there being a difference in the fabrics, and as great a difference would be in other fabrics. The fixed trade, capital,

* It appears from the Table, No. I. that the quantity of wool ſhe ſent was trifling.

and

and ſkill of England, at preſent at leaſt, bid defiance to the no exciſes of Ireland. If Ireland cannot meet Engliſh manufactures in her own markets, notwithſtanding her advantages at home, how can ſhe meet England to any great extent at foreign markets, without thoſe advantages. New fabrics require new capitals, new eſtabliſhments, and new exertions.

Taking the year of the greateſt export of woollens from Ireland, viz. 1783, we find, the quantity of wool, woollen and worſted yarn exported, greatly decreaſed, and that the whole quantity of wool exported, was - - 2063 ſtones, 10 lbs.
and the whole quantity
of woollen yarn, - 440 ſtones.
worſted yarn, - 66677 ſtones.
It is clear, that even if theſe quantities had been of the ſort of wool fit for making the woollens that Ireland imports, it would not have been ſufficient; for, in the ſame year ſhe imported near 800,000 yards, viz.

	Yards.
New drapery, -	420,415 ½
Old drapery, -	371,871

and until Ireland becomes a country of ſhepherds, and prefers ſheep-walks to tillage, and depopulation to population, ſhe cannot import much leſs. She has grown rich, and more populous; her demand for woollens has increaſed, and is likely to increaſe much more: Great Britain, therefore, has little to apprehend; but the conſumer in Ireland muſt pay whatever additional expence is thrown on woollens imported; he muſt pay the extraordinary expence of ſmuggling, or whatever duty may be laid.

Equal duties muſt be low; if high, they would be protecting or prohibitory duties againſt England. It is obvious, that whatever they are, they muſt fall on the conſumer in Ireland, who muſt have theſe articles in ſome ſhape.

As to the ſyſtem of no duties in either country, if that ſhould be propoſed, Ireland will dread the extinction of ſome of her preſent manufactures of woollen. She will recollect the effect of the Methuen treaty with Portugal, by which Britiſh woollens were introduced, and the Portugueſe manufactures

factures of wool, which had been eſtabliſhed above twenty years before, were cruſhed; for although that treaty, on the face of it, appears ſimple, and the principles of it not reciprocal *, its object was as now ſtated; it was underſtood ſo at the time, and it ſucceeded. The conduct, however, of Portugal was not impolitic. It was not poſſible for her to carry her woollen manufacture to any great extent, or nearly to ſupply her people and colonies. She got a great advantage, as to her wines, by the treaty; and her people were ſupplied cheaper with the neceſſary article, woollens.

Ireland, perhaps, had better be content to remain as ſhe is: her duties on her imports, which are 5 per cent. on the cuſtom rate, and 5 per cent. more on the rate for import exciſe, give advantage to her own manufactures. Her import duties conſiſt of cuſtoms payable like the Britiſh, and alſo of an

* Britiſh woollens were not to be admitted on better terms than thoſe of other countries, although the wines of Portugal were to pay in England lower duties than any other wines.

exciſe, called import exciſe, which is bondable until the goods are taken out for conſumption, when it is to be paid, and has therefore got the name of exciſe. Draperies, however, from Britain, do not pay the import exciſe, only the cuſtom.

The manufactures of wool certainly have increaſed, and are increaſing, under their preſent circumſtances; and a ſufficient quantity is manufactured, to ſhew that extraordinary meaſures are not neceſſary. The clamour on this ſubject has been nearly confined to Dublin, the moſt improper place for the manufacture, and where it is much to be wiſhed it may not flouriſh; where a diſpoſition has appeared rather to riot and inſult the Legiſlature, than to cultivate, with induſtry, the benefits of an enlarged and free commerce. The ſeat of expence and licentiouſneſs is not a fit place for the principal branch of the woollen manufacture, or for any other, except ſlight fabrics, which depend upon changeable faſhion, and muſt be under the eye of the ſhopkeeper.

A good

A good deal has been already ſaid, relative to woollens, which applies to the general requiſition from Ireland, that the manufactures of both countries ſhall be liable to equal duties on import into each other. The Britiſh duties, when compared with the Iriſh, will not, by any means, give to an indifferent perſon the impreſſion of fairneſs and equality, or even of utility; they have, however, in truth, little or no effect, except to cauſe uneaſineſs, to irritate, and ſeemingly to juſtify the idea of protecting duties. Whilſt ſimilar Britiſh commodities command the markets of Ireland, from their ſuperior quality and cheapneſs, though charged with the Iriſh duties, what chance of ſale have the ſame articles of Iriſh manufacture at Britiſh markets, even without a duty? An alteration, therefore, would benefit Ireland, or prejudice Britain, much leſs than is imagined. This argument, perhaps, it will be ſaid, may anſwer for the year 1785, but may not apply to the probable future ſtate of manufactures in Ireland in 1800—that the progreſs of manufactures in the two countries, one of which pays taxes, to the amount of fourteen millions, and the other

of

of one million only, little or no part of which can be ſaid to fall on manufactures, is not likely to keep an equal pace. To which it may be replied, that the price of labour, and expences of all kinds, will undoubtedly increaſe with the increaſe of manufactures in Ireland; that one million of taxes is leſs diſproportionate to the wealth of that country, than may appear to thoſe who have not examined their comparative riches, and that if Great Britain makes no improper ſacrifices, ſhe will maintain her preſent ſuperiority. It merits, therefore, the conſideration of the Britiſh manufacturers, whether the ſale of their goods will not be much more hurt by the diſſatisfaction of Ireland, and non-importation agreements, (although the latter will not be effectual or laſting) than by a reduction of the duties on the import of Iriſh manufactures. The duty on woollens, imported into Britain from Ireland, amount to a prohibition. At the ſame time Ireland has laid duties equal to a prohibition in favour of England, on draperies from all other countries; they are alſo in favour of her own woollen manufacture.

SCHEDULE of DUTIES on the under-mentioned Articles in both Countries.

Import Duties payable in Britain. £.	s.	d.		Import Duties payable in Ireland. £.	s.	d.
2	0	$6\frac{4}{20}$	All woollens or old drapery, per yard, — — — —	0	0	$5\frac{19}{20}$
0	5	$11\frac{10}{20}$	Stuffs of all kinds, made or mixed with wool, or new drapery, per yard, — — —	0	0	$1\frac{12}{20}$
29	15	10	Cotton and linen manufactures, and cotton mixed, for every 100l. value, on oath, — —	9	18	$5\frac{8}{20}$
65	10	10	Linen cloth, printed, for every 100l. value, on oath, — —	9	18	$5\frac{8}{20}$
65	10	10	Leather manufactures, for every 100l. value, on oath, — —	9	18	$5\frac{8}{20}$
0	3	$11\frac{13}{20}$	Checks, the piece not above 10 yards, besides in Britain, for	0	1	$3\frac{17}{20}$
35	15	0	every 100l. value, on oath,			
5	6	$9\frac{19}{20}$	Sugar, refined, per cwt. — —	1	13	$11\frac{17}{20}$
4	12	$1\frac{17}{20}$	Starch, per cwt. — — —	0	6	$5\frac{13}{20}$

Many other inſtances might be added, not leſs remarkable: and Ireland does not a little complain of want of reciprocity on the ſubjects of malt, beer, &c.

Average

Average of three years, ending Chriſtmas 1777, of the duties ariſing on all goods and merchandize exported from England into Ireland:

	£.	s.	d.
Britiſh goods, -	9136	16	8¼
Foreign goods, -	719	18	5¼

Average of the ſame years of the duties ariſing on all goods, &c. imported from Ireland into England, - £. 6490 11 1½

Average of three years, ending the 5th of January, 1778, of the duties ariſing on all goods, &c. exported from Scotland into Ireland, - - - £. 602 0 7¼

Average of the ſame years of the duties ariſing on all goods, &c. imported from Ireland into Scotland, - £. 585 13 1

It may be obſerved, that the larger ſum is received in that country, where the markets in general are open to the other upon low duties, and that the balance of the general interchange is in favour of Ireland.

BOUNTIES.

As to bounties, Ireland complains of that given by Great Britain on the export of ſail cloth to Ireland; ſhe finds it extremely hurtful to her fabric, and complains with double force, as it is a branch of her linen manufacture. She will be juſtifiable in counteracting, by duties or regulations, all bounties given on export to Ireland, where ſhe has ſimilar manufactures: but the Britiſh act adds to the bounty now given, as much more as at any time Ireland ſhall impoſe as a duty on the import of Britiſh ſail cloth into Ireland. The mode of conteſt may become ridiculous.

DRAWBACKS.

As to drawbacks, it is deſired that Great Britain ſhall allow a full drawback on all commodities ſhe exports to Ireland, on the principle, that the country which conſumes the article, ſhould have the uſe of the revenue raiſed upon it. Refined ſugar and hops are

put on that footing. It is not unreaſonable, and it is encouraging to trade. It ſhould always be remembered, that whatever part of a duty is not drawn back, is a tax on the carrying trade.

NAVIGATION ACT,

Colonial and Foreign COMMODITIES, *&c.*

Excluſive of the ſeveral difficulties reſpecting the interchange of native commodities and manufactures, new pretenſions are brought forward, relative to the commerce reſulting from the intercourſe, which has been opened to Ireland, with the Britiſh Colonies, Plantations, and Settlements, and alſo relative to the interchange of Aſiatic, African, and American produce. Ireland deſires that the conſtruction of the navigation laws may be altered, ſo as to admit Colonial and foreign commodities from her warehouſes into Great Britain, in like manner as they paſs from thence into Ireland.

The

The objections to this, on the part of the people of Great Britain, are numerous and ſtrong. It is ſaid, that the advantage in queſtion is the only one ſhe has reſerved to herſelf, as head of the empire, for the vaſt expence of ſupporting foreign connections, eſtabliſhing, maintaining, and protecting colonies, which alone belong to her; that when ſhe gave the participation of all other advantages, ſhe reſerved this alone; which if ſhe yields, there are few other points in which the navigation laws will be of ſervice to her, relatively to Ireland. It is the only commercial part of them that is of conſequence; it is the ſingle privilege, which leaves any gleam of hope to Great Britain, that ſhe ſhall weather the conſequences of the war, to which Ireland contributes nothing. In fact, the very operation in queſtion of the navigation laws, is the only barrier remaining againſt the migration of her manufacturers and merchants. The preamble of her navigation and other laws, give the reaſons for confining Colonial and foreign trade, viz. "Not only for the ſake of employing and "increaſing Engliſh ſhipping and ſeamen, "and ſecuring a vent for woollen and other

" manufactures; but alſo to make this king-
" dom a ſtaple of the commodities of thoſe
" plantations, as well as of the commodities
" of other countries for the ſupplying them;
" (it being the uſage of other nations to
" keep their plantation trade to themſelves)
" and farther, if Colonial commodities
" ſhould be taken from any part but the
" plantations, that the trade of them would
" thereby in a great meaſure be diverted
" from hence, and carried elſewhere; His
" Majeſty's cuſtoms and other revenues
" much leſſened, the fair trader prejudiced,
" and this kingdom not continue a ſtaple
" of plantation commodities, nor that vent
" for the future of the victual and other
" native commodities of this kingdom."—
Such was the declared principle of the navigation act *, and ſuch certainly was the principle of thoſe acts † which paſſed explanatory of it; and the act which repeals ſo much of the navigation laws, as prevented a direct

* 12th Charles II.

† 15th Charles II. and the 22d and 23d Charles II. confirms the intention of the 15th, to prohibit importation of, &c. from Ireland, and reſtrain it to Britain.

intercourſe

intercourſe between Ireland and the Britiſh plantations, does not repeal the 12th Geo. III. chap. 55.* which prohibits the import from Ireland into Britain, of rum, ſugar, coffee, and other American and Aſiatic goods: nor can it be ſaid, that it appears from the act, which extended the trade of Ireland, to have been the intention of the Legiſlature to make any alteration in that reſpect. The cuſtom-houſe practice has continued the ſame ſince, as it was before the paſſing the act, and during upwards of a century, viz. not to admit the articles in queſtion from Ireland. Nor can it be objected as inequitable, that Britain declines to take from Ireland commodities which that country takes from her. Ireland takes them from the mother country of the colonies; and, ſtrictly conſidering the matter, ſhe has no rightful claim to get them

* Although this act was paſſed to bind both countries, and thoſe parts which purport to have an internal operation in the levying of forfeitures or penalties, or are directory to the officers of the Iriſh revenue, may now be conſidered as a dead letter; yet, the ſpirit and intention of this act is clear, and that part which was intended to bind Britain, and which prohibits importation of the produce of Aſia, Africa, and America, from Ireland, is ſtill in force.

in any other way from any colonies, except through the indulgence of the mother country of thoſe colonies. Ireland takes little from Britain of any kind, that ſhe can get cheaper elſewhere: ſhe takes as it ſuits her, and ſhe cannot object to Britain the price ſhe pays for Weſt-India commodities, or the giving the monopoly of her markets to the produce of the Britiſh plantations, as in return ſhe has her ſhare of the monopoly of their markets. It would be an extreme folly in Great Britain to maintain ſettlements at an immenſe expence of public money, and to confine herſelf to the purchaſe of their produce at an unreaſonable price, and to the private detriment of individual conſumers, and then to put it in the power of another country to purchaſe, with the manufactures of that country, the produce of ſuch ſettlements, and to retail them afterwards in the Britiſh market. The miſchiefs connected with that point alone are too obvious to be inſiſted on. It is farther to be obſerved, that trade is of ſo delicate a nature, that it is almoſt impoſſible to conjecture, how reſtraints either laid on, or taken off, will operate—that it is prudent to apprehend every evil, of which

which there is any probability, however diſtant—to fear the effect of a conceſſion, the whole extent of which it is at leaſt difficult to foreſee—and that it is unneceſſary to riſk the conſequences of the meaſure in queſtion. The maintainers of theſe objections will add, that Great Britain was greatly benefited by being the depot of American, Aſiatic, and African produce; and ſhe has reaſon to expect, that ſhe will ſtill be ſo in a very conſiderable degree. The mere mercantile gain is an inconſiderable object, when compared with the various advantages of the exchange of commodities; with the value and quantity of induſtry, which the above ſyſtem of trade diffuſes throughout the community; with the employment given to an incredible number of people; with the various expences incurred from the time of the arrival, until the re-exportation of the commodities, in landing, ſtoring, aſſorting, re-packing, porterage, re-ſhipping, &c.; but above all, the increaſe of ſhipping, and of ſeamen. The value of trade is beſt aſcertained by the quantity of employment and maintenance given to the induſtrious part of the community. In ſhort, it would be entering into a wide field,

ſield, to enumerate the various advantages which centered in this country, in conſequence of the trade in queſtion; beſides the great object of freight, which is juſt as much a part of commerce as import and export. It cannot, therefore, be expected, that Great Britain ſhould create and eſtabliſh a dangerous competition for objects of ſuch eſſential importance to her; and in a country, which has peculiar advantages, from ſituation and other circumſtances, which ſhe herſelf has not. It is highly proper, that Great Britain ſhould encourage the manufactures and other trade of Ireland: but there is great difference between ſuch conduct and changing her whole commercial and colonial ſyſtem; encouraging the migration of men, capitals, and trade, with their mercantile knowledge, their ſteadineſs of exertion, their induſtry, and talents for commerce, to produce an unequal competition againſt herſelf. Ireland has her advantages—let her enjoy them: Great Britain will readily adopt and promote any meaſure, by which ſhe can benefit Ireland, without materially injuring herſelf: but ſhe cannot reaſonably be expected to embrace meaſures tending to divert the colonial trade, and to tear

from

from her own merchants, and from her own people, all the beneficial ſecurity of an important branch of trade, which ſo peculiarly belongs to her; of which only ſhe has made any reſerve or exception; and on which her continuing to be the ſtaple for colonial and foreign articles depends, and alſo her naval ſtrength, her population, revenue, and public credit: — She has entirely relaxed all navigation and colonial principles in favour of Ireland, except the point in queſtion. She communicated every other advantage of import and export of colonial articles to the ſiſter kingdom; but wiſely abſtained from giving the power of importing them from Ireland into her own market. She has given to Ireland the liberty of ſupplying herſelf, and any part of the world that will admit Iriſh veſſels, with the produce of the Britiſh colonies; and it is ſurely very unreaſonable that ſhe ſhould not be allowed the excluſive right of ſupplying herſelf with her own colonial produce. She cannot, therefore, without being regardleſs of her eſſential intereſts, promote ſtill farther the export of colonial articles from Ireland, and encourage the Iriſh, or, rather, the Britiſh

merchants, who would gradually remove their capitals, to ſpeculate largely to her diſadvantage: and unleſs Great Britain ſhould yield the advantage in queſtion, and thereby furniſh a new and near market, it will not anſwer to Ireland to ſpeculate conſiderably in articles for which ſhe has not ready and certain cuſtomers. She will fear a ſuperfluity; and inſtead of being a dangerous competitor with Great Britain in the trade in queſtion, ſhe will not very ſpeedily import a ſufficiency even for her own demand and conſumption. If Ireland could become the entrepôt, in a conſiderable degree, for Europe, which would naturally happen, if allowed for Great Britain, ſhe would get poſſeſſion of thoſe articles, and thoſe advantages, which would ſupply capital: — She would have the capitals and credit of other countries to ſurpaſs the mother country; and as there would be then no difficulty in importing into this country from Ireland, whenever the market ſuited, the merchants of Britain would be encouraged to avail themſelves of the peculiar ſituation of Ireland, to carry on the whole of their re-export trade through that country, and they would

would find means of ſupplying three fourths, perhaps, of their cargoes from thence. They would fix houſes in Ireland, tranſmit capitals, and, by degrees, migrate thither themſelves. The tobacco trade would inevitably ſettle in Ireland. The towns that have the re-export trade in Great Britain will loudly complain; and Glaſgow, Liverpool, Briſtol, &c. will foreſee and feel the approaching loſs of their preſent local and other advantages. Such are the ſpeculations of Ireland in forming the preſent requiſitions! Her object is to become the mart in Europe for the trade of America, for which ſhe is ſo well ſuited by her weſtern ſituation, immediately open to the ocean, and acceſſible almoſt with every wind; her veſſels often croſſing the Atlantic in a ſhorter time than the ſhipping of London require to clear the Channel. In addition, her ſhips can be victualled infinitely cheaper; and every neceſſary of life being low, as well as public taxes, the general charge of conducting trade will be proportionably leſs. In conſidering this matter, we ſhould look forward to the period when Ireland ſhall have

attained a much more ſignificant commercial ſituation than her preſent, and be able to trade on as good a footing to the weſtern world as England. She would, from her ſituation and advantages, ſupply Great Britain with American produce — The gain of Ireland, by ſuch a meaſure, can reſult only from the loſs of Great Britain.

Some farther obſervations, perhaps, are worthy the attention of the Britiſh merchant, the colonial proprietor, and the oſtenſible ſervants of the Crown. The two firſt claſſes, as reſpecting themſelves; the latter, as having a reference to the Public. The vaſt ſums that are due from the Colonies to the merchants of Great Britain, ſurely ſhould be conſidered. That this extenſive credit was given on the ſtrength of laws now ſubſiſting, and which have hitherto been deemed as part of the colonial conſtitution.—That any material deviation may deſtroy that confidence which their immediate and excluſive connection with this country has inſpired, the baſis on which their credit has hitherto been built, and the

the beſt ſecurity to this country for the payment of their debts.

The planters, or colonial proprietors, ſhould alſo be induced to reflect on the conſequences of any innovation, ſhould it appear, that, as Ireland may import many of the articles which are produced in our colonies from other countries, ſome of thoſe articles may, through that medium, be clandeſtinely introduced into Great Britain, and thereby deprive them of the very great advantage they now derive from the excluſive ſupply of this country. Beſides, it may be ſuggeſted, that if any regulations take place, which tend to leſſen the ſecurity of the creditor, that the merchants of Britain will immediately call in their debts, and in future refuſe lending ſuch ſums as they have heretofore done; which is ſo eſſential to the welfare and proſperity of the Colonies, that it is the event which, of all others, they ought moſt to dread. So far the intereſt of individuals, or rather of ſome particular bodies of men may be affected, ſhould the import of colonial and foreign articles be allowed into England from Ireland.

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In the important article of Revenue, great conſequences alſo are to be expected; which, though intereſting to every perſon, applies more immediately to thoſe ſervants of the Crown who have the direction of the public treaſure, and whoſe duty it is to find equitable and adequate ſupplies for the exigencies of the State. Theſe official ſervants of the public ſhould reflect ſeriouſly on the conſequences which may accrue from the enormous frauds that may be introduced by this means, to the detriment of ſo intereſting a branch of national reſource, as the import duties on tobacco, wines, rum, and many other articles. Notwithſtanding all the regulations and reſtrictions which can be deviſed, it may in a great meaſure counteract thoſe uſeful and beneficial arrangements, which have lately been made for the prevention of ſmuggling; and which, we are told from the higheſt authority, have ſucceeded ſo well. Should ſuch an alteration take place, it will hold out every encouragement for the revival of that baneful and deſtructive mode of traffic. As the duties on the importation of moſt articles are much higher in England than in Ireland, it will induce the fraudulent trader

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to run the riſque of introducing them into this country, more particularly, as the proximity of the two iſlands, and the number of ports conſtantly open to them, will afford every convenience they can wiſh, either as to forming depoſits for their goods, or the readieſt means of bringing them over hither.

One other circumſtance it may likewiſe be neceſſary to mention, as being more favourable to the ſmugglers than any thing they have ever yet experienced, namely, the ſecurity they will derive from an exemption from ſeizure, unleſs they happen to be taken in the act of landing their goods; which is not very probable, on ſo wide and extenſive a coaſt: for in that caſe, their veſſels will be permitted, in the ports of Ireland, to clear out for Great Britain, with thoſe articles on board; and of courſe, being admiſſible here, they will be exempt from ſeizure on their whole paſſage, as well as on their approaching the coaſt, even in the Thames, protected by clearances; and ſhould they be ſo cloſely watched at any time as not to have an opportunity of landing their goods clandeſtinely,

or, in the event of bad weather, being obliged to ſeek the ſhelter of ſome Britiſh harbour; in either of theſe caſes they will remain ſecure, and can always ſave their veſſels and cargoes by bringing them to an entry, and paying the duty on thoſe particular goods, ſo that, in the event moſt unfavourable to them, they will be on a par with the fair trader.

The conſtruction of the Navigation laws now contended for, is, perhaps, the only point in which the intereſts of the two countries ſeem ſeparate and diſtinct; and if Ireland did not expect great benefit, ſhe would not ſo ſtrenuouſly urge the claim; but this given up, England could not pretend to a competition with her in time to come. The matter in queſtion indeed ſeems ſo ſelf evident, that no man of the leaſt commercial knowledge, who has talents or abilities to form an accurate idea on the ſubject, can heſitate in declaring the meaſure a ſlow, perhaps, but certain poiſon, to the commerce, manufactures, and population of Great Britain. In ſhort, it is not the buſineſs of Great Britain to encourage the migration

gration of her merchants and people to ſituations of greater convenience, where all the articles of trade and manufactures are ſo completely unburdened. England in half a century would find herſelf more hurt than ſhe has been by all her debts and all her taxes.

The advantage in queſtion, is neceſſary to counterbalance the advantages of Ireland, and preſerve an equality with her. The burdens of the country, and, above all, the taxes on the inland and foreign commerce, ſufficiently counterbalance all local advantages which ariſe from the habits, and the manners of Great Britain. It is eſſential, that the capitals and trade of the empire ſhould not center in that part which does not contribute to the expences of it. The point in queſtion would give to Ireland all the advantages of an union, without her taking upon her, any of the diſadvantages. Ireland does not at preſent diſpute in which of the countries the ſeat of empire ſhall be; but that queſtion would be as reaſonable, and not of more conſequence than the preſent. The affectation of ſaying that

it is a point of no conſequence, but that it will quiet Ireland, can only miſlead the moſt ignorant or the moſt thoughtleſs. We do not in general obſerve, that malecontents, or people diſſatisfied with or without reaſon, are apt to be quieted by unſubſtantial favours. Ireland, indeed, has not been ſatisfied with great conceſſions. But if it were in truth a point of no conſequence, thoſe who urge it, are endeavouring to deceive the people of Ireland, and to prevail upon Great Britain to be acceſſary to the deceit. If it were in truth an unſubſtantial favour, thoſe who ſtate it as ſuch will chearfully receive the refuſal of it. It ſhould not even be admitted, that the point remains to be ſettled — It is ſettled — It is a fixed principle, the moſt neceſſary to ſupport Britain — It is the foundation on which her proſperity depends.

Beſides theſe general objections, Great Britain has another of no ſmall conſequence. In the American and Weſt-India trade, the great difficulty has been, and will be, to obtain payment for merchandize. The principal mode of payment has been, and

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muſt be, by the produce of America and the Iſlands. If that produce ſhould be admitted into this country through Ireland, much of it will go there in payment for proviſions of ſeveral kinds, linen, woollens, and various articles of manufactures and cloathing. By ſo much as Ireland ſhall take of that produce to re-export into this country or elſewhere, to that amount will England loſe of the beſt, and, in ſome caſes, only mode of payment from America and the Iſlands; and Ireland, inſtead of paying England as heretofore, will ſend thoſe very articles to her, by which alone ſhe could expect to be paid by America for merchandize ſent there. Other objections to the expectations of Ireland in this point will ariſe in multitudes; theſe are glaring and obvious. The depreciation of landed eſtates, and the ruin of ſtockholders, and of public credit, would be among the certain and inevitable conſequences of ſuch a conceſſion; and however ſtrong the declaration may appear, it is demonſtrable, that an abſolute and entire ſeparation of the two countries would be leſs pernicious to the intereſts of Britain. If theſe objections appeared even leſs ſolid,

if they were but doubtful, or poſſibly in ſome degree founded on prejudice or jealouſy, ſtill any Miniſter would be hardy indeed, who ſhould overlook them. On the other hand, it will be falſe patriotiſm to diſquiet the two countries on a point, which one is not likely to yield, which the other has no rightful claim to preſs or inſiſt on; which is not neceſſary to her, having already more ways of employing her capitals and people, and of growing rich, than ſhe or any country now, or ever is likely to avail itſelf of; conſidering at the ſame time, that great conceſſions have already been made, and that others are ſtill aſked which are more reaſonable, and more likely to be obtained, and not ſo prejudicial to Great Britain.

It is obvious, that the claim in queſtion equally relates to Eaſt India goods; and it has been ſaid in the Parliament of Ireland, that as ſhe gives a monopoly of her conſumption to the Eaſt-India Company, and takes from her in value to the amount of 350,000l. yearly, which is more than any other country, except Great Britain, ſhe ſhould be ſup-

plied in the ſame manner, and have equal advantages. The Indiamen ſhould have liberty to land their cargoes in Ireland; the Company ſhould have warehouſes, and attend their cuſtomers there. The India goods imported into Ireland, ſhould be warehouſed without duty, with a power of exporting to Britain; a fixed number of outward-bound Indiamen ſhould viſit Ireland, and there take their out cargoe, and ſuch manufactures for which there is a demand in Aſia, &c. &c. &c.

The anſwer is, that Ireland has no better claims on the India Company, than ſhe has on any other company of merchants in London; that ſhe has Eaſt-India commodities as cheap, or cheaper, from the Company, than ſhe could have them from any other quarter. She has no better claim to be waited on, and her manufactures taken from her door, than Edinburgh, Glaſgow, Liverpool, Briſtol, Quebec, Halifax, &c. The remains of our Norman dominions have an equal right to the ſame advantages; and Jerſey and Guernſey may equally claim to be waited on, and to ſee India ſhips in their ports. The charges of the tranſport of India goods to the diſtant

parts

parts of this kingdom, are fully as great as to the ports of Ireland; and the conſumers in thoſe diſtant parts pay heavy duties on theſe very articles, which go towards the expences of the empire, conſequently towards the expence of maintaining the India trade, to which Ireland contributes nothing; for whatever duties are paid by the conſumers in Ireland, go to the revenue of that country.

Beſides the above, the objections to this claim are generally the ſame as to the other, for admiſſion of colonial or foreign produce from Ireland: they are not the objections of the Company of Merchants trading to the Eaſt Indies, but the objections of the people of Great Britain. — The reſtraints are as much againſt the Company as againſt Ireland; the Company might victual her ſhips cheaper there, and might have ſeveral advantages, by a direct intercourſe between her factories and Ireland; but it would be inconſiſtent with the intereſt of England, and nearly in the ſame manner as already ſhewn on the ſubject of the other claim.

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The Great *Reciprocal* Commercial arrangement between Britain and Ireland, of which we have heard ſo much, conſiſts, as we have reaſon to believe, of all, or moſt, of theſe expectations on the part of Ireland: how the reciprocity is likely to ariſe, does not appear; but the American treaty, although not quite ſo ſtrong a caſe as this may prove, is the precedent on which to found pretenſions. At leaſt, theſe are the difficulties;—the ſooner they are determined the better. Great Britain has to lament at this day, that ſo many great points have been conceded, without having this material one properly arranged; which, undoubtedly, in the years 1780 and 1782, ſhe might have ſettled in her own way. We have now only to hope, that miniſters will have the wiſdom to determine this, and every other point, firmly and decidedly; ſo that Ireland may ſettle to induſtry, and that no commercial queſtion may be again permitted to ariſe between the countries. Without ſuch reſolution, any diſcuſſion of the ſubject would be folly. The whole ſeems ultimately to reſt on the expediency. The people of Great Britain think that Ireland is in the habit of making

making ſucceſsful requiſitions, and that Great Britain is in the habit of inconſiderate conceſſions. The feeble Adminiſtrations of England, to avoid the mere difficulty of the day, are fond of expedients. The country has reaſon to be tired of them; it is time ſhe ſhould ſupport herſelf; and there is not only more dignity, but policy, in firmneſs.

END OF PART I.

The Second Part will ſoon be publiſhed.